

THE URBAN SPACE AS AN INDUSTRIAL LEGACY

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During the seminar “*Enterprise pioneers in Brazil and the construction of the XXI century*” held at the University of São Paulo in November 2003, among reports of the lives and works of remarkable figures of Brazilian enterprises, professors of Economical History, administrators and economists proclaimed the need to form and motivate the youth on “enterprising”, stimulating them to become enterprisers. The claim was reinforced by promises of “spectacular economical growth”, made by president Lula, and it was justified by the present lack of names similar to those from the past, that were capable of performing the task of “making Brazil big”. However, the complete lack of discussions on the local consequences of the works carried out by the great entrepreneurs was appalling. Considerations on the social, cultural and environmental impact of these works were expected, along with concerns about the spatial organization of the city, an aspect that is more closely related to the object of architect and city planner studies than to enterprise administrator studies. In order to fulfill these expectations, the present work was elaborated and it seeks to understand, through in-depth literature analyses, the relationships between the industry and the city; thus verifying its several facets to make the industrial legacy evident to the formation of the urban space in Brazil.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION: A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

According to LEFEBVRE (1991 : 03): “*The city precedes the industrialization*”, and before the city, “... *there was the settlement, the shrine, the village; before the village, the camping site, the shelter, the cave, the rock pile...*” (MUMFORD, 1998: 11), all results of a human disposition and need to live in society. This indicates the appearance of the cities marked by the establishment of communities that are able to concentrated previously dispersed functions, rather than by the agricultural revolution that allows the production of a tradable yield exceeding; in WEBER (1958) the economical¹ characteristic of a city is its ability to trade, independently of the origin of

¹ WEBER (1958), reinforces, however, that the economical notion alone is not capable of defining the city, it is necessary to add the political context (fortress and citizenship). In the interpretation of M. I. SZMERECZANYI (2005), Weber understands the city

the exceeding yield. Thus, the city is regarded as a market due to the consumption needs of its population. Instead, BENÉVOLO (2001) considers that the control over the production is responsible for the transformation of a village into a city that therefore controls its rural areas. Although CASTELLS (2000: 42) clarifies that it is not a matter of precedence of the countryside over the city, since the later “...*can only exist based on the exceeding yield produced by field work*”. This posture that considers the development of the city dependent of the generation of an rural rural yields surplus a pre-condition for city development is taken further by JACOBS (1969), who the idea that the countryside is not only dependent on the city, as well as the idea that the city is a pre-condition for the existence of the countryside .

The country and city dichotomy has turned Sociology into a fecund field for the discussion on the relationship between the city and the industry. The term *urban* turns into a noun that designs the *space of the city*, as a counterpart of the *rural*, the *space of the countryside*. The consideration of cultural concepts was also included in the discussion, making the *blasé* attitude of the city inhabitant a straight opposition to the countrymans attitude (SIMMELS, 1902); the adoption of urban civility as a way of life, makes urbanity a synonymy of civility, that arises from it towards the rural area and to the “*end of the world*”, that is, towards non-urban areas (WIRTH, 1940) . The counter-posing between countryside and city, however may be considered simply as a construction derived from the need to separate two distinct forms of organization, making sense only from the moment where the idea of a city is consolidated creating the necessity of a counterpart (WILLIAMS, 1990)

Another way to approach the relationship between the city and country is by the social division of work optics that according to MARX (1999 : 407), this approach is also essential due to the belief that “...*the whole economical history of the society is summarized by the dynamics of this antithesis...*”. This amplification of the importance of the role of the cities, after the Industrial Revolution, is due to their condition as import point of concentration of people, becoming able to provide abundant manpower and to gather an expressive consumer market, thus becoming a preferential site for the installation of industries, which were previously found distant in the countryside. However, if on one side, the proximity between city and industry was attractive for

essentially as a political community that defends its autonomy from external powers, thus being the origin of States and of democracy.

the industrialists due to the existence of infra-structure networks, the contact with the consumer market and the access to manpower reservoirs and, on the other side, it was counter-balanced by the appearance of severe social and sanitary problems, due to low wages, extreme exploitation of work power combined with real estate speculation and the costs of construction, which generated extreme difficulties of manpower sheltering in western urban areas.

The moment after the cities had grown and the appearance of the first modern metropolis was also a moment in which the State predominantly adopted the *laissez-faire*, accompanying the economical liberalism dictated by the bourgeois interests, seconding a profound questioning of the urban space. The main capitals of Europe became object of the attention of philosophers, politicians, physicians and engineers and were swept by reform waves, which were most pragmatic in Paris. These reforms had as priorities the regulation of the “fluxes” (from people and merchandise trafficking to water and waste circulation) and urban embellishment, leaving the market in charge of the demand of housing for the proletarians expelled from central areas. For the industry owners, this proceeding was, on one side, little compensatory due to direct and indirect costs incurred with the worker as salary raises or by the yield decrease caused by illness; on the other side, it waved the possibility of increased profits through the building of housing for the workers. The profit could be indirectly obtained, since the factory and housing owner was allowed to control the time and conditions of the life of the workers, even outside the industry plant, leading or forcing them to activities and conducts that could positively reflect on industrial yield; and also directly by controlling the rent prices, thus detaining the decisive instrument in the regulation of the wages.

The belief that the environment was a forming agent of the individual was gaining strength in several sectors of the society. In this context, the relationship between urbanization and industrialization given by the location of the industries was no more solely determined by physical and structural conditions, thus acquiring a social connotation. The construction of whole cities by industries assumed novel contours by adding the social project to the industrial project, whose concretization was linked to the existence of an urban project. In this aspect, the influence of the ideas of Robert Owen and Charles Fourier are strongly perceived.

From this point, it can be observed that the urbanization generated by the industry creates locations plain of exchange value due to the fact that these spaces are more than just a stage for

social activities, but are also components of an investment plan made by the industry owner in order to increase his profit, similarly to what previously happened to the housing. The “sale” of urban and social projects was and still is used by the industry to attract, exploit, manipulate and fix the work power. Therefore, the relationship between urbanization and industrialization that had been born at city emergence as a production site, whose value was mainly due to its eminent use features, is modified as capitalistic industries put more effort into the construction of urban space, later transformed into merchandises that are negotiable in a concrete (housing x wage) and in an abstract (life quality) way, which makes it possible due to the interlacing of industrial, urban and social projects. This fact inserting the industrialists’ intervention in urban space in the context of the “*urbanism of sale promoters*”, according to which one does not sell “...*a house or a real estate but the urbanism. With or without ideology, urbanism becomes the exchange currency.*” (LEFEBVRE, 1991: 25)

DIVERSITY AND THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE ENTERPRISE INTERVENTIONS IN THE SPACE

Enterprise intervention in urban space, however, has assumed several forms, which is visible in the determination of the denominations given to these experiences. The fact in itself is not troublesome, “... *the essential problem does not lay on the diversity of the nomenclature, but exactly in the opposite attempt to elect a single name for the diversity of distinct urban forms.*”(CORREIA, 2004: 11)

In the same line of reasoning, GUNN (1997) reminds us that, on one side, the construction of urban settlements destined to production and marked by a rigid social control exerted by a single company may be found in many anterior moments, such the situation of the Indian reductions and plantations created in the Americas in the XVI and XVII centuries, on the other side, the discontinuities and obstacles in this path. These obstacles have allowed, at first, to place in the same class distinct experiences such as these and company towns, since in all these examples it is possible to detect an enterprise management form and the control of the town by a single company, although on the other side, it is observed that the projects leading to their construction had distinct objectives and intentions, which reflects deeply in their formal and functional organization.

The detection of these differences in the objectives are responsible for driving the territorial organization carried out by several agents and corresponds to an aspect of great relevance, due to its strict correlation to formal and social factors that are activated by it.

Objectives, understood as “*act of will*” in the concept employed by GALANTAY (1975) according who it is an essential element in understanding of new towns, since

"New towns are planned communities consciously created in response to clearly stated objectives. Town creation as an act of will presupposes the existence of an authority or organization sufficiently effective to secure the site, marshal resources for its development, and exercise continued control until the town reaches viable size."(GALANTAY, 1975: 01)

From this quote, the idea that the creation of “new towns” is directly linked to a necessity of planning not necessarily urban, but an action plan that assumes diverse characteristics: political, for new capitals; colonizing, for colonial cities; economical, for company towns; military, for fortresses; religious, for religious communities, location, for satellite cities and so on. The reasons for making the new cities not an end in them, instead consisting in a byproduct of a broader project are complex.

According to this point of view, company towns can be included in the class of new cities due to the fact that they are material structures implanted aiming firstly to allow the industrial production before becoming an urban project, these cities were already industrial projects. Moreover, their implantation causes great impact on the physical environment and on the economical and social organization

However the existence of an urban project being essential for new towns, it may be irrelevant for company towns, as far as it is the intentionality of building a whole city instead of only a group of houses for lodging the employees that distinguish them.

From the terminology used to describe the corporate intervention in the space, such as *model* and *landscape towns* (CRAWFORD, 1992), the *resource towns* (ROBSON, 1962) and the pre-industrial cities (GARNER, 1995), they all may be considered *new towns*. However, each of these denominations carries in itself some specificity. In the case of *model town* it is the undeniable presence of a social project that may be religious or merely educational. The project implies in an extensive control of the population inside and outside the factory and, this aspect is considered primordial for their moral formation according to the desired template. In these communities,

many times inspired by utopias, the figure of the boss is frequently confounded with the figure of a father which confers him an authority that allows him to survey, give prizes and to punish without questionings from the population. The *landscape towns* are company towns that have their design conditioned by the characteristics of the industrial production and of the local where they are implanted, being commonly associated to extraction activities such as wood and mining industries, or even hydraulic energy plants (CRAWFORD, 1992). Concerning *resource town*, the most remarkable aspect is the type of activity: the exploitation of natural resources. This activity requires the proximity to mines and usually implies in isolation due to the difficulty of access (*remoteness*) along with its longevity that is limited by the extinction of the mine. These factors indicate the need to build reasonably autonomous and self-sustaining urban structures that should, at the same time, be able to be transformed, since the perspectives of modification of the main activity, relocation to another place or abandon are intrinsic to the nature of the activity to which they are associated to due to the inevitable scarcity of the exploited resource.

Camping sites, *mono-industrial towns* (ALLEN, 1966), industrial villages (BLAY, 1985) and factory nucleus (CORREIA, 1995) are other denominations found to design the influence of enterprises on the urban space. These forms of actuation, however, do not comply of a company town, due to characteristics, such as: the temporary nature of the camping sites; the existence of an urban structure previously to the arrival and domination of the industry, in the case of mono-industrial towns; the insertion or proximity of an pre-existing city that leads to a dependence relationship of the urban equipments in the case of industrial villages; and the closed status and reduced dimensions of nucleus.

This way, the distinction observed between factory nucleus and company towns resides in the stage of the first as *city nucleus* while the second are categorized as *latent cities*. Although, the factory nucleus usually presents social characteristics accordingly to the ones of an urban community, their physical structure generally does not present the dimension sufficient to make it a city. Moreover, due to its private nature, all the collective equipments and all the activities developed in its interior are controlled by the owner (CORREIA, 1995). This way, when it develops and emancipates it may generate a city or it may remain with form and dimensions similar to the original, such as in nucleus built by the sugarcane mills (CAMPAGNOL, 2003).

In turn, company towns are *latent cities*, due to the fact that similarly to the new towns, they possess physical structure according to its city condition, although still showing immature social structure. The mature stage is correlated to political and administration factors, such as the “aperture”² of the city and its political emancipation, as well as the social organization of the community. However, psycho-social factors must be added, which is reached when the population, through the appearance of associations and organizations independent from the enterprise, is capable of public expression of opinions divergent from the proposals or impositions of the mother-industry. In many communities, this process becomes evident very early³, while in others it is only noticeable later.

The nomenclature discussion is mainly a consequence of translating “town” as “cidade”, which may lead to attribution of “city” features to urban nucleus whose dimensions would not be consistent to the designation since the main distinction between them resides on this aspect. However, the definition of “town” has a meaning closer to the word “vila” in Brazil. Moreover, the common use of the term “vila operária” to designate urban settlement constructed by companies for their employees in or outside of cities (Correia, 1995) prevents the usage of such translation. Thus, as observed further, the use of the term “cidade empresarial” (company town) is justified not because it is the most literal translation but because it differentiates it from other denominations given to company interventions in urban space. This differentiation is based on its inclusion into what we call “*new towns*” and on the fact that it considers political and social factors privileging the intention of the urban project, a will of constructing, not only an urban settlement to support the workers population but instead an urban structure with city dimensions and city political, economical and social complexity.

The acceptance of the use of the term *city* to designate the enterprise mode of action on the environment, contrasts to authors (TAFURI, 1980) who consider such experiences merely a form of capitalistic control on the territory or those whose reluctance in accepting the term is due to the idea that “*The city is not founded, it is formed*” (ARGAN, 1992), therefore also contrary to the use

² “Aperture” is the moment at which the enterprise sells or donates its real estate, usually by selling the houses to the workers and to donate the publicreal states to the city government. A similar term is “disassemble”, used within here in a most restrict sense as disassembling or destruction of architectural groups built by the industry, in a gradual or abrupt process.

³ The importance goes beyond the softening of the class conflicts allowing the formation of a bourgeois class (REID,1981)

of the term *new town*. According to this line of reasoning Telma CORREIA (2004: 11) points out that

“The terms company-town (cidade empresarial), town of enterprise (cidade de companhia) and workers town (cidade operária) – are used, to our understanding, in cases where an isolated settlement founded by a company gathers a population of more than four thousand inhabitants involved in urban activities, is the administrative headquarter and offers a certain degree of personal and political autonomy to its inhabitants. ... such a situation is only present when a process of disassembling of the original structure of the factory nucleus is under way, when the company that built the settlement is setting itself apart from property and local control by selling real estate and transferring the services to the State or to other private company. In this context, it is an intermediary situation – in several senses – between a factory nucleus and an open and fully realized city.”

However, the observation of the buildings in some hydraulic power plants, mining companies and steel processing industries indicate the need of distinction between enterprises arising as factory nuclei and later conquer their independency and those created with physical structure adequate to constitute a city but also politically emancipated, as observed in Ouro Branco and Ipatinga, which were conceived from the start as “open towns”. This fact does not imply that they have functioned from the start as *complete cities*, instead it is verified that even nowadays they still show difficulties to consolidate a self-regulated real estate market. Similar to those examples, in Volta Redonda and Timóteo, the remarkable presence of the industry in public administration can still be observed. The presence of representatives of the industry in the city staff is constant and developmental projects are often jointly elaborated.

Therefore, one can conclude that political emancipation is not a synonym to independent administration, nor to social independence, as observed in Timóteo, where, regardless of the fact that its emancipation from Coronel Fabriciano occurred in 1964, the aperture of the city only occurred four years later and several public services remained under control of Acesita. Moreover, the political emancipation of Timóteo, as a turning point to conquer citizenship privileges, was weakened by its occurrence during the Military Dictatorship, when the city was considered *area of national security*, which allowed the city mayors and company presidents being named directly by the President of the Republic. One must also take into consideration the cultural and social factors; from as early as the 50 decade a differentiated local identity had been formed, however it remained dictated by the company and only in the 80s a real opposition to

these canonical rules could be seen, in the form of workers strikes and of satiric Carnival groups. These manifestations are the first to be considered as real expressions of citizenship maturing of the community.

This way, it is verified that the dependence on the industry is not interrupted by decree, by the concession of its political emancipation, as observed by VEIGA (2002) who argues that a city nucleus in Brazil may not always be considered urban, since hundreds of them are mere groups of houses. Therefore, instead of denying the *city* status of these industrial experiences, given by the intentionality of its construction, we hope to understand its urban formation process by dividing it in three distinct stages according to the degree of complexity of its physical, social, political and economical organization. These stages should not be necessarily seen as successive or inevitable. At the first stage company towns lack several requisites such as political independence, differentiated identity and complex social organization; at the second stage we can place company towns that present a well-structured social frame, relative political independence and a consolidated collective identity, however, the association to the mother-industry remains strong enough to inhibit free expression and defense of personal opinions. The later stage includes the cases in which the ties between the community and the industry remain strong, but festivities, formation of syndicates, clubs and independent associations allowing the exercise of a mature citizenship.

It is essential, however, to note that, regardless of the importance of recognizing that the diversity of nomenclature corresponds to an existing diversity of industrial intervention forms in the construction and organization of the urban space, it should not imply in the establishment of rigid definitions or in the attempt to fit all the fore mentioned examples into categories. This way, we hope to avoid incurring in mistakes, since in the majority of the cases the special features of each one allow them to be design in different ways depending on the aspect emphasized. This is exactly the situation of the city of Timóteo, its roots on a national development project supported by the promotion of industrial activities and its implantation planned to contemplate the construction of urban structure of great impact allow to consider it a *new town*. The construction of an urban nucleus aiming to shelter its working force even, posterior to the initiation of the industry construction in almost a decade, points to designate it *industrial nucleus*. The inclusion of a social project, in the 50s decade, led to call it *model town*. After the city “aperture” and its

political emancipation, the company kept the ownership of great extensions of land, even so still after its privatization (1992), and the reduction of almost 50% of direct employees the formation of a strong identification of the community with the company, to such an extent that, during a popular poll (1980), the elected name for the city was of Acesita, characterizes it as a mono-industrial town. It is only after, the strikes for better working conditions and satiric representations made by Carnival groups in an Acesita sponsored event that community shows enough signs of civic maturity to consider Timóteo as a city.

THE URBAN SPACE AS A LEGACY FROM THE INDUSTRY

To talk about legacy or inheritance is to talk about the transmission of something, usually goods, to future generations. Therefore, it carries implicitly the idea that the giver no longer exists, which seems impair recognizing the meaning and the value of the transformations brought about by industries. Intentionally caused or not, these transformations practically encompass all aspects of modern living, making inevitable changes in its supporting structure. Thus, industrial development has raised plants and industrial equipments to proportions and a degree of complexity never seen before. In a simplified way, it can be said that the power of attraction of the industries swelled the cities and emptied the fields, forcing several industry owners to built urban complexes ranging from groups of houses to real cities, in order to guarantee capable and stable workforce.

Although in Brazil the influence of industrial entrepreneurs on the urban space may be found from the last decades of the XIXth century and, as previously mentioned, the role of industrialization as a propeller of urbanization is unquestionable, only recently the direct action of the industry on the construction of housing premises, workers villages, factory nucleus and company towns has become the focus of architecture and urbanism researchers. In this line of thought, the detailed and comprising survey work carried out by Philip Gunn and Telma Correia should be mentioned. The researchers are responsible for the project NUVILA, initiated in the 90 decade and aims to create a catalog of the settlements, nuclei and cities built by companies in the whole country (GUNN & CORREIA, 2004). The fore mentioned work provides explanations on the extension and dimension of the enterprise action in the organization of the urban space in Brazil. The obscure character of these actions may be associated to intrinsic conditions of the formation of the Brazilian society and to the moment at which the problem of housing became visible in

Brazilian academic research⁴. However, an important auxiliary factor that should not be left behind in this process is the difficulties in recognizing the value of the elements that are still part of our daily life, such as cities.

This way, understanding company towns as an industrial legacy means to go in the search of the past that remains in the present, although not exerting such a tight control on the space of the city as it used to exert at the time of its construction. In many cases, the industry continues to command the processes capable of driving society formation and space organization. Therefore, it is not a fixed and distant past instead it is a sum of anterior moments irregularly superimposed on its predecessors, a sum of transmitted legacy at each rupture moment, at each moment when the industry alters its action form on urban space. It means to distinguish the aspects of the legacy; material due to its direct intervention on space, technical due to workers formation, social due to community organization, economical due to merchandise production and marketing and finally, urban due to the transformations it causes on the cities.

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⁴ The first studies about popular housing in Brazil date from the end of the 70s, period in which an intensive questioning about planning is initiated, due to the strong arm control by of the State, which was responsible for the construction of great housing complexes. The absence of the desired effects and the economical crisis of the 80s led to strong criticism on the government construction plans. Therefore, the volume of governmental deeds and a certain lack of distinction between the public and private, characteristics of societies organized under paternalist stigma, seems to have contributed to dim the the private initiative contribution on the construction of the urban space in Brazil.

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